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**HUDSONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MICHIGAN SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 9, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Sara Driesenga of Hudsonville High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Michigan Softball Player of the Year. Driesenga is the first Gatorade Michigan Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Hudsonville High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Driesenga as Michigan's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Driesenga joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The 6-foot-1 junior right-handed pitcher and first baseman has led the Eagles to a 38-1 record this season and the Division 1, Region 2 tournament, scheduled to begin June 12, as they pursue their second straight Division 1 state title. The 2008-09 Gatorade Michigan Softball Player of the Year, Driesenga has compiled a 24-1 record with a 0.18 earned run average, recording 244 strikeouts in 154 innings this spring and issuing just seven walks. She had thrown seven no-hitters, including three perfect games. Through 39 games, she owned a .541 batting average with 12 home runs, 18 doubles, 69 runs scored, 51 RBI and a 1.082 slugging percentage.

Driesenga has maintained a weighted 4.04 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a youth softball instructor and as part of multiple community-service initiatives in association with her church youth group.

"Sara Driesenga has got great composure and two different drop balls," said Bill Conroy, Driesenga's coach with the Beverly Bandits Amateur Athletics Union program. "She's even throwing harder than she did last year. She's such a smart kid and she's got a great stick. She can do it all."

Driesenga has made a verbal commitment to play softball on scholarship at the University of Michigan beginning in the fall of 2011.

The Gatorade Player of the Year program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by ESPN RISE and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Driesenga joins recent Gatorade Michigan Softball Players of the Year Jenna Ignowski (2007-08, Niles) and Amanda Chidester (2006-07, Cabrini) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners, and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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